

United States House of Representatives



**Subcommittee on National Security,
Emerging Threats and International Relations**

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****MEDIA ADVISORY****

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**Congressman Christopher Shays to Hold March 30 Hearing
*“Does the ‘Total Force’ Add Up? -- The Impact of Health Protection
Programs on Guard and Reserve Units?”***

(Washington, DC) -- Congressman Christopher Shays (R-CT), Chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations, will convene an oversight hearing to examine the application and outcomes of force health protection programs on Reserve Component units. The Tuesday, March 30, 2004 hearing will convene at 10:00 am in room 2154 of the Rayburn Building in Washington, D.C.

Reservists and National Guard members face unique challenges accessing health care services during and after mobilization. Unlike their active duty counterparts, RC members' pre-deployment health status may not be closely monitored. Receiving health examinations and follow-up care after deployment can be overly complicated and slow.

“National Guard and Reserve soldiers bring unique health needs to the battlefield,” Shays said. “Defense Department force health protection programs are not always as sensitive to those needs as they should be.”

A recent Army survey of troops in Iraq found a significant number of U.S. troops were experiencing anxiety, depression and stress affecting their performance and morale.

“Long deployments and separation from family can have an especially negative impact on Guard and Reserve units. Mental health outreach and

suicide prevention programs should be sensitive to that and targeted to those most at risk,” Shays said.

Some RC soldiers report they have not been thoroughly briefed on medical programs. Pre- and post-deployment health assessments are not always administered, as required by law. Injured RC members have come back without being aware they could apply for active duty medical extension. Some soldiers have fallen through the cracks and have had a hard time trying to obtain treatment and reimbursement for injuries suffered on active duty

The Reserve Component (RC) consists of the Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, the Naval Reserve, the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserves and the Coast Guard Reserve. According to the Department of Defense, as of September 30, 2002 there are about 1,812,355 members of the RC. Since September 11, 2001 about 300,000 RC personnel have been called to active duty.

This hearing is part of an ongoing Government Reform Committee examination of issues affecting Reserve Component units. Last year, Shays and Chairman Tom Davis exposed serious problems in Army National Guard pay systems. Next month, the Government Reform committee will convene a hearing on National Guard transformation. In May, the Shays Subcommittee will take testimony on equipment and training shortfalls in Reserve Component units.

Committee on Government Reform
Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations
**“Does the ‘Total Force’ Add Up?-The Impact of Health Protection Programs on Guard
and Reserve Units?”**
(March 30, 2004)
Witness List

PANEL ONE

First Sergeant Gerry L. Mosley
296th Transportation Company, Brookhaven, MS
US Army Reserves

Specialist John A. Ramsey
32nd Army Air Missile Defense Command
Florida National Guard

Mrs. Laura Ramsey

Mr. Scott Emde

Mrs. Lisa Emde

Specialist Timothy McMichael
US Army Reserves
Medical Hold Unit
Fort Knox, Kentucky

PANEL TWO

Dr. William Winkenwerder
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs
Department of Defense

Accompanied by:
Lieutenant General George P. Taylor Jr.,
The Surgeon General, U.S. Air Force
Department of Defense

Rear Admiral Brian G. Brannman
Deputy Chief, Fleet Operations Support, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, U.S. Navy
Department of Defense

Mr. Wayne Spruell
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Reserve Affairs
Manpower and Personnel

Lieutenant General James B. Peake
The Surgeon General, U.S. Army
Department of Defense